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ABSTRACT

This report of the first session of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century describes its agenda of the working methods, the approach, the scope of its work, and the main lines of inquiry to be followed. The initial debate revealed a central theme to be sustained throughout the work of the Commission: the role of education in promoting cohesion in an increasingly globalized society. The Commission decided to focus particularly on discovering what common, universal problems needed to be addressed throughout the world. Without neglecting diversity of application or the evident need to take into account specificity of each aspect of the educational process, its aims, its workings, and its outcomes, the Commission decided it could best fulfill its mandate in attempting to discern how education could make a difference in bringing people into closer harmony, in short, how it could help people learn to live together. This focus encompassed both the physical and the spiritual aspects of society, economic and moral, environmental and cultural, and technological and aesthetic. Seven functions of education were defined. Six lines of inquiry were adopted and discussed: (1) education and culture; (2) education and citizenship; (3) education and social cohesion; (4) education, work, and employment; (5) education and development; and (6) education, research, and science. Transverse themes include education and the teaching process, communications technology, and organization of education. A schedule of future sessions was included. Three appendixes contain a report by the chairman of the Commission, the speech of the director-general, and the mandate and membership of the Commission. (DK)

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Commission internationale sur l'éducation pour le vingt et unième siècle

International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century

FIRST SESSION

UNESCO HEADQUARTERS - 2-4 MARCH 1993

REPORT

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UNESCO, Paris

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International Commission on Education
for the Twenty-first Century

First session
UNESCO Headquarters - 2 - 4 March 1993

Report of the First Session

INTRODUCTION

The first session of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century was held in Paris at the Headquarters of UNESCO from 2 to 4 March 1993. The Commission had on its agenda the working methods, the approach, the scope of its work, and the main lines of enquiry to be followed.

The initial debate revealed consensus on a central theme to be sustained throughout the work of the Commission: the role of education in promoting cohesion in an increasingly globalized society. The Commission decided that it would focus particularly on discovering what common, universal problems needed to be addressed throughout the world, and that, without neglecting diversity of application or the evident need to take into account specificity of each aspect of the educational process--its aims, its workings, its outcomes--the Commission could best fulfil its mandate in attempting to discern how education could make a difference in bringing people into closer harmony, in short, how it could help people learn to live together. This focus would encompass both the physical and the spiritual aspects of society: the economic and the moral, the environmental and the cultural, the technological and the aesthetic.

There was, throughout, an acute sensitivity expressed by the members of the Commission to the perilous nature of attempting to address the questions facing education in their totality, the impossibility of responding to the specific and the inappropriateness of proposing that which would be normative. The role of international agencies being to deal with what was not adequately or best covered in a national context, such an international commission could best hope to make a contribution by highlighting those things it could hope to do well, and where its contribution could, indeed, make a difference.

CHALLENGES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

In keeping with its mandate, the Commission debated on the main turning points in human development on the eve of the twenty-first century. The twenty-first century, it was agreed, was a symbolic rather than precise point of departure, for change and the challenges posed by change took place over a continuum. The turning points, it was generally agreed, fell into three main categories: those related to the economy, those related to demographic change, and those

related to science and technology, including or even especially, the communication media. All three of these would have important consequences for ecology and the environment.

In these, as in the other topics discussed, emphasis was laid on the relationship between contradictory trends or forces. There were stable or shrinking birth rates in some countries of the world, with the resulting aging of the population, and on the other hand a demographic explosion in most of the world with the existing and growing pressures of this much larger and younger population on the economy, on political structures, and on frontiers. Economic change seemed to produce both increasing interdependency and globalization on the one hand, and greater gaps between the very rich and the very poor, both in terms of individuals and social groups and in terms of countries, on the other. Scientific and technological progress produced both the causes of greater disparities and the solutions for many of the ills of society: it had ensured improved health and longer lives for entire populations, with as a partial consequence a demographic explosion without precedent in human history that menaced not just the quality of life but the very existence of some of these populations. The very advances in production technology which freed individuals from some of the most dangerous and arduous tasks by allocating them to machines were the cause of loss in the overall quantity of jobs available for an explosive potential work-force. Technological advances had so greatly changed the nature of work that even the geographical displacement of production and services had become easy and a potential source of accelerating marginalization of those who were not masters of the new techniques.

Another trend which would undoubtedly have great impact on education, and where education would be called upon to play a role, was an increasing opposition between value systems: global communications meant that information, and some of the values underlying the "global village", were disseminated to all; parallel to, or even in reaction to this globalization of means of communication and messages, was an increasing ethnic and religious conflict, religious fundamentalism, and calls for retrenchment which did not go unheeded in societies or groups that perceived themselves to be marginalized.

Thus, globalization and diversity would continue to exert their simultaneous influences, and the tensions between integration of the world at large and the pressures and need for pluralism would continue. Similarly, interdependency and dependency would, paradoxically, increase side by side.

Modernity, as a concept, was debated at length, both in its social and economic function, and its cultural aspects. Modernity that was related to industrialization, to the application of scientific and technological innovation, was both indispensable from the economic point of view, and a factor for increasing domination by those who were in control of its tools over those who were left behind. The international market-place, with its increasingly technologically-driven societies, would either welcome groups and nations or pass them by. And yet, the results of the search for modernity, in increasing urbanization and in alienation from cultural values and traditions which provided social cohesion, had produced some disastrous results.

Modernity, furthermore, was being called into question by some, since modernity had as a basic aim growth and industrialization, which could no longer be used as yardsticks. Economic progress was jeopardized by demographic growth, and the world would soon be facing global shortages of food and water, for example. Consequently, the tension between modernization as exemplified by scientific and technological change and retrenchment, would certainly amplify. And yet, education by itself, was the most important factor in preparing people for change and for accepting innovation and modernity.

The changing concept and role of the nation-state would also have important consequences for education: the state, traditionally, had a preponderant role in the decisions about the type and quality of education to be delivered. In many countries sheer numbers precluded the possibility of the state providing education for all in the immediate future, and therefore new partnerships and new resources would have to be found, with a consequential redefinition of the role and responsibilities of states. In other countries and regions, the pressure to recognize specificity of culture, language, or diversity of approach, would lead to new forms of organization in which the state would necessarily relinquish part of its role. Lastly, religious groups were demanding, and receiving, the right to participate in the definition of the values and contents of education, sometimes with the agreement of the state, sometimes in spite of it: these trends would certainly continue and had to be taken into account. Thus, the tension between unity and diversity would continue in new, perhaps unforeseen, ways.

PURPOSES OF EDUCATION

In the future, education would unquestionably have a greater role to play in the promotion of values: values related to all the attitudes, capacities, and competencies required to live in harmony within one's own society and with other societies. Education could, and must, make the difference between an inexorable slide into degeneration and decline of human civilization and the discovery of new patterns of progress and tolerance. The eternal dialectics in education were between the teaching of values and the neutrality of education, between knowledge and know-how, between equity and excellence, and between the simultaneous needs to prepare for both individual freedom and solidarity, autonomy and responsibility.

As a working hypothesis, the functions of education were defined as follows:

1. to contribute to the all-round development of individuals capable of reaching their full potential in a pluralist society;

2. to educate individuals to be social beings capable of co-operation, dialogue and the exercise of their responsibilities as citizens;

3. to fight against inequality of opportunity;

4. to enable people to participate in working life and in the economy, thus contributing to the advancement of society; this task requires a constant interactive relationship between education and research;

5. to offer people access to education throughout their lives, both in the formal system but also through non-formal means, favouring the participation of each individual as both educator and learner alternately throughout her or his lifetime;

6. to contribute to the development of technical progress through controlled, innovative and rapidly applied research;

7. to encourage mutual co-operation and understanding between all human beings, regardless of differences of religion, race and language.

SIX LINES OF ENQUIRY

The Commission adopted, as a general framework, the lines of enquiry proposed by its Chairman, and discussed the content of each of the lines of enquiry and its bearing on the work of the Commission.

Education and culture

The relationships between the different, even opposite cultural values in different parts of the world and the imperative need within the education process to impart values compatible with a world society was the explicit or implicit theme which ran through the discussion on education and culture. It was pointed out that between "East" and "West" there were basic differences which could be highlighted: equality versus hierarchy as the source of order, individualism versus collectivism as the essential form of social organization; co-operation versus competition, idealism versus pragmatism. These differences needed to be understood and appreciated.

There were universal values, which were accepted in all cultures and which were also key elements of a world society: tolerance, understanding, acceptance and appreciation of diversity, were among these. Spirituality, which was a fundamental to culture in many respects, was linked in an inextricable way with education; however, when the teaching of spirituality became a monopoly of a group or way of thinking, obvious dangers arose.

Education and citizenship

Individual values were the keys to effective citizenship, as were the basic life skills (literacy, numeracy, capacity to participate in society) essential in all fields of human endeavour. Thus, achieving and maintaining literacy was crucial, and the fundamental role of lifelong education could be stressed in this context. Education and society at large were faced with a new distribution of time between education, productive work, and non-work (retirement, unemployment) over individual lifetimes, and could recall the Greek notion that learning took place all the time when one was not working. Education was necessarily a preparation for life, only a proportion of which was related to work.

However, the very concept of citizenship as communicated through the education system needed clarification: some systems were profoundly pluralist in nature and as a consequence perhaps not sufficiently focused on the integration of all individuals; others were essentially monolithic. In a world in which democracy was seen to be necessary, one could wonder what the necessary tools were for the effective practice of democracy and what education could do to prepare individuals and groups for participation in a democratic society, in particular when a large proportion of the population was uneducated. Teaching of group values (civics for example), which was both necessary and difficult, would need to be examined, as well as the role of the school in developing in young people a sense of social responsibility towards the community and towards participation in national life.

Education and social cohesion

Marginalization was seen as an increasingly dangerous phenomenon all over the world. There were increasing tensions brought about by globalization, where an "underclass" was cut off from the rest of the world by an elite who could monopolize access to the global community. There had been a point in human development when marginalization could, at least in theory, have been

solved by the redistribution of income, but this point had passed and new organizations of global society had to be imagined for the survival of all.

The current violent breakup of some societies was to some extent a failure of education, the failure to educate citizens capable of participating in the establishment and maintenance of democratic political systems. Underlying the problems of social cohesion were, clearly, the problems of working towards increased equity, of preparation for conflict resolution, and for participation. Formal education had to play a role, and the complicated issue of what could be taught in terms of content and behaviour in order to foster social cohesion had to be addressed.

Education, work and employment

Clearly, attention focused on education when unemployment grew. Education was, however, only one element, albeit an important one, in the development of human resources. With increasingly rapid change in the nature and content of work, learning to cope positively with change (including becoming mobile) was a determinant factor. The function of work in society was undergoing profound changes: there was less and less work available for a larger potential work force, with the result that work was becoming a scarce resource. Work would in any case occupy a decreasing proportion of human lives (in hours per week, and in duration in years), and thus had to come to be seen as only one part of the human experience. Work, although an economic necessity, was also, and importantly, a means for forging character and fiving purpose of life.

The critical question of whether sustainable growth could be achieved - particularly in the poorest countries - would have an impact on the organization of education. Learning had to prepare people for the labour market, but there were not only problems with those who had the wrong kinds of knowledge but also with those who had adequate knowledge but the wrong attitudes. Preparation for work had to be seen in the broadest possible context, including a review of the equilibrium between general education and training, the need to impart both basic life skills and specific competencies related to technology.

Education and development

Education and development had two facets: the mastery of problems related to population and environmental deterioration, and promotion of the capacities of innovation, entrepreneurship and initiative which could favour economic development in particular. There was a clear commitment in theory on the part of all societies to development, and thus to solving environmental problems and supporting education: however, both politicians and individuals were reluctant to make the difficult choices involved in making the necessary long-term investments required. In order for societies to develop one needed not only opportunities for all and general participation on the part of members of society, but also advocacy and stimulation of excellence and the development of a climate in which special abilities could flourish.

Education, research and science

The academic community needed to have closer links than was currently the case with the economic sector: this link, although even more tenuous in the poorer countries than in the rich ones, was more important in those countries, where scarce resources made it essential to use all those available to their maximum potential. The ability to understand and profit from science and technology was an economic necessity, brought about by the growing gap between those who mastered technology and were in control of technological advance and those who were

subject to its effects. Learning and mastery of science and technology could be seen as a precondition for emerging from economic bondage. Values, in research, in development, and in application, always important, had become more so: gaining acceptance of the need to apply values in scientific work was a major task of education and of academics.

TRANSVERSE THEMES

Education and the teaching process

An early task of the Commission would be to examine the agents through which educational messages passed, as much of education had left the hands of educators and become the province of people or groups who had no vested interest in the communication of values discussed under the lines of enquiry proposed. The various channels of information and learning should be explored, to examine where and how the most important types of learning took place: within or through the family, the social group, information media, the religious group and so on. From these various sources, one could seek to grasp a common message.

Schools had to develop new partnerships with the communities in which they were situated. The low image of the teaching profession, partly due to the difficulty of recruiting and keeping high-level teachers and partly due to a loss of confidence on the part of teachers themselves, was a key issue to be examined. The role of structural adjustment could not be ignored in this connection: each restriction on resources available for education inevitably had major impact on teachers salaries and conditions of employment in countries where nearly the whole education budget went for salaries.

Excellence, in teaching, among personnel, was a key counterpart to equity and democracy. Another equilibrium which needed to be studied was the balance between knowledge and know-how. Know-how was important, but know-how was so rapidly outdated in a world of rapidly-evolving technological change that basic knowledge and general education had to be acquired to up-date specific know-how. Helping teachers break away from rote-learning methods to more creative techniques was a challenge not to be passed by.

Communications technology

It was a truism to state that computer literacy was becoming as fundamental as basic literacy, and that in many countries, the most important teaching tools were communication media (radio, television). Education, in spite of the evident nature of these developments, had not yet fully come to terms with them. Communication media had in many settings more influence on learning than anything else, far more than schools or even the family, and as mentioned above, it was emphasized that the agents responsible for the communications media often had no vested interest in subscribing to the aims of educators.

As far as the economic sphere was concerned, communications technology had an important role in the development of "place-free" production, a phenomenon for which people needed to be prepared through appropriate education.

Organization of education

Structural adjustments, and in general demands made by world financial bodies, forced countries into situations in which actions designed to produce long-term benefits - became impossible. Therefore, most developing countries could not even maintain existing educational infrastructures, much less improve on them or generate innovative methods for organizing and managing their systems.

The tension between requirements of equality of access and the search for quality and encouragement of excellence were discussed. The needs of particular groups, especially women and girls, were important, constant concerns of decision-makers, and yet much progress needed to be made.

In discussing change and reform, it was clear that there was some scepticism as to the real desire for change in many countries, and even when the desire was present there were great delays in putting knowledge into practice. Although in many countries reform was constantly attempted, the keys to authentic educational renewal could be elusive.

Educational Reforms

In examining the background paper on educational reform, three main areas of interest in the paper were highlighted:

1. The categorization of the natural obstacles which make reform difficult, in particular a) financial difficulties; b) the systemic nature of education which makes it impossible to deal with all aspects at once and requires an organization in sequence; c) the conflict among different relevant time-frames -- that of the system is a long one, that of the individuals involved is somewhat shorter, and that of the political policy-makers is a relatively short one.

2. The complex nature of the distribution of responsibilities for education.

3. The conflict between reform and diversity: reform by its nature, has a systemic quality, and individualizing reforms can be difficult or have results the opposite to what was hoped.

The general feeling was that examination of reforms and the reform process was premature, and that this topic would have to be raised again at a later stage.

International co-operation

Underlying the grave nature of many of the problems facing humankind, the need was felt to find a message of hope. One had to seek ways to empower individuals and societies to take charge of their own destinies and to have hopes and plans. Ways to increase the collective wealth of societies and nations through entrepreneurship must be both possible and feasible. Corollary to these ideas was the proposal that the examination of the role of the State in education already mentioned was important in this context: empowerment of groups and individuals necessarily meant that the State would relinquish some of its control over education.

It was stressed that international co-operation was a key factor in renewal, and that one of the roles of the Commission would be to reflect on how to energize this co-operation (bringing together the various agencies, reflecting on how they could better fulfil their roles). The desire to avoid going over well-trodden ground was unanimous: use had to be made of available knowledge, studies, wisdom and experience.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE AND TOPICAL FOCUS OF FUTURE SESSIONS

A tentative schedule and work plan, which would be modified as the need arose, was agreed, as follows:

Tentative Work plan		
First session 2 - 4 March 1993	Overview of education, aims of education	UNESCO Headquarters Paris, France
Second session 20 - 24 September 1993	Education and development . employment, work, international division of work . reinforcement of national institutional and intellectual capacities Financing and organization of education	Dakar, Senegal
Third session 12 - 15 January 1994	Education and science . science teaching . production of knowledge . science and the creation of wealth . responsibilities of scientists	UNESCO Headquarters Paris, France
Fourth session 13 - 15 April 1994	The process of education . the teaching process . lifelong education . distance education . multiculturalism . the training of teachers Education, training and work General technical training	Vancouver, Canada
Fifth session 26 - 30 September 1994	Education, citizenship and democracy . education and values . education and minorities . education and political identity . responsibility . cultural diversity and citizenship . science and tradition	Santiago de Chile
Sixth session January/ February 1995	Education and culture Presentation and discussion of a first draft of the final report	Beijing, China
Seventh session April 1995	Education, community and social cohesion . construction of social units . the state, the community, and the economic sector	Arab States
Eighth session June/July 1995	**Presentation and discussion of the final report**	UNESCO Headquarters Paris, France

UNESCO

International Commission on Education
for the Twenty-first Century

First session
UNESCO Headquarters - 2 - 4 March 1993

Report by Mr. Jacques Delors,
Chairman of the Commission

After thanking the members of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century for the great drive and sense of innovation which they had shown in setting about their work, M. Jacques Delors, the Commission's Chairman, began his review of the first session's discussions, although he said there could be no question of drawing conclusions for the time being. The members of the Commission had decided not to follow any preconceived pattern but to proceed by a succession of approximations in an attempt to define the subject of their investigation - education - through a variety of approaches.

The Chairman began his review of the discussions by quoting something that Professor Carneiro had said, which in his opinion expressed what had been uppermost in the Director-General's mind when he set the Commission up, namely "education can make a difference". This was an assertion that education could contribute to making the frighteningly complex and risk-fraught world in which we lived a better place - even if reforms were not enough by themselves to bring about a change in human nature.

The changes taking place in the modern world

From the outset, the Commission decided to take account of the growing interdependence of the modern world - after all, the term "global village" had now entered the language - and of its wide-ranging diversity. There was, for example, not just one North and one South but a variety of situations within North and South. Without confining itself to a single development scenario, the Commission endeavoured to identify the forces underlying development, and the problems, challenges and dangers with which it would have to contend.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, the international scene had been marked by a series of upheavals and changes. When President Reagan took office in the United States, a well-defined economic ideology, supply-side economy, based on tax-cuts and financial deregulation, was ushered in. This led to a period of economic growth and job creation, especially in the United States, but it also created the enormous "financial bubble" which was one of the causes of the market crash in 1987. This had far-reaching repercussions. It became easier to take over businesses than to create them, and financial deals outstripped economic activity proper. These developments had not been without their impact on education since the point was reached when money, having become all-powerful, changed cultural and moral attitudes. Education had felt the consequent repercussions and the societies in which we lived were still being affected by the resulting loss of balance.

The Chairman then turned to another important event of recent years - the collapse of the Communist system from 1989 onwards, which had given rise to so many hopes. Everyone knew that the countries freed from the grip of totalitarianism were now facing a hard time as they tried to build democracy and, at the same time, adapt their economies to the international situation. The release of forces that had been stifled for far too long was also leading to tensions between nations and ethnic groups, as the tragedy of Yugoslavia and other bloody conflicts, as in Tajikistan, had shown. Unrest among minority groups, and the appearance in so many parts of the world of areas of instability, were such a source of concern to the United Nations that it was beginning to envisage the adoption of a status for minorities. The war in Iraq and the start of the peace process in the Middle East could also be regarded as events that sometimes caused disappointment and anxiety and at other times brought a glimmer of encouragement. They showed a world that was, so to speak, "in travail", in the middle of a great upheaval, whose economy was unlikely to be capable of withstanding the after-shock of the bursting of the "financial bubble", visible in the decline in asset values and the debt burden of companies that had over-stretched themselves through speculation. The final outcome had been a financial recession, the extent of which was plain for all to see.

In this constantly changing world, the renewed vitality shown by the countries of Western Europe that had decided to throw in their lot together initially came as a surprise, but the European Community, in its turn, had not been able to resist the centrifugal forces at play and it, too, was now in a state of crisis.

This rapid overview of the past ten years showed that events could, from one day to the next, give grounds for hope or for despair and could lend weight to predictions either that the world that was on the path to unification or was threatened with disintegration. That was the uncertain context in which the Commission would have to draw up its report. The time when such conflicts would at last be resolved and when the "global village" would really come into being still lay far ahead in the future.

A new international division of labour

At the same time, we were now witnessing a vast economic mutation and the appearance of a new international division of labour, a phenomenon whose full magnitude the European countries perhaps still did not grasp. Industries were being decentralized to places where production costs were cheaper and the countries benefiting from this development were intent on making their voices heard. However, some economists were tending to mistake the impact of the financial boom, with the debt fall-out that was so glaringly conspicuous in Japan and the English-speaking countries, for another phenomenon, which also reflected a determined effort by the South to take its place in the world economy. We were now witnessing the economic rise of countries like Chile, Argentina and Mexico, or of Malaysia and Indonesia. A new batch of countries was emerging from underdevelopment and was striving for a place among the economic powers. This was a very important development in a world of diversity where the odds were still very uneven, since although the countries mentioned had managed to attain a per capita income of $ 2,000, there had been an increase in the number of those where the figure was under $ 200. We were accordingly witnessing, at one and the same time, a determined effort by some developing countries and the collapse of others, particularly in Africa South of the Sahara, which really was the forgotten continent where development was concerned. If the Commission was to take account of the diversity of the present-day world, it would have to be attentive to this new international division of labour.

The information society and employment

Another feature of the emerging world was a no less important mutation occurring in science, which had brought the information society and new kinds of employment into being. Economists were now agreed that jobs had to be divided into three categories: conventional production jobs, low or medium value-added jobs, especially in services, and very high value-added jobs which, in point of fact, formed part of the world of information and the sign. The difference was thus no longer between shop-floor workers and office workers or between engineers and managers, but a more recent one that raised considerable problems from the standpoint of education, at least when one had to establish a link between education and employment.

Problems, challenges and dangers

The Commission also drew up a preliminary list of the problems, challenges and dangers that it would have to consider. While the list was neither exhaustive nor completely new, it covered a series of parameters that its members would have to constantly bear in mind.

Among the problems identified, the Chairman referred in the first instance to demographic movements and the population. The earth already had more than 5,000 million inhabitants, but 12% of them, consisting of the population of the United States, the European Community and Japan, accounted for 72% of the world's gross domestic product, whereas a further 20% generated only 1% of the GDP. The gap was thus still vast, and yet the population was continuing to grow. Instances could, of course, be cited of ways in which this was being checked, particularly the very close link between education for women and population growth.

A second problem was bound up with the environment. It was probably not necessary to dwell on this after the Rio Conference, even though the follow-up did not appear to be matching the ambitions that the Conference had expressed.

Yet another problem stemmed from the economic and financial turmoil already mentioned. The economic and financial world seemed to be without the leadership that had at one time been provided by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank or, on the initiative of the industrialized countries, by the Group of Seven. After a brief moment of hope, the situation was again one of chaos, and this obviously had significant implications for the developing countries and those in debt.

Lastly, jobs were becoming a scarce commodity. This was already true of the developing countries and was now becoming true of the industrialized countries. Should it be concluded that, in future, there would no longer be jobs, in the traditional sense, for everybody? Did the goal of full employment still make sense and, if so, did it mean the same thing as it did 20 or 30 years ago? If not, what was at stake, as Mr. Geremek had pointed out, was the very way in which life was organized, with its sequence of study, work and retirement.

The challenges identified by the Commission naturally included underdevelopment and its attendant misfortunes, but they also included social exclusion in the affluent countries. Poverty in those countries was a feature of exclusion that affected not only foreign workers but the native-born population, too. New processes of exclusion were thus emerging, since poor education often led to a loss of social status that was a cause of poverty. Although it was not an absolute rule, failure at school among people from very modest social backgrounds could very easily lead to their marginalization and then to poverty, through a sequence of developments that caused a loss of self-confidence and ended up eating away at the most elementary reactions

permitting survival in society. In the Chairman's opinion, that was why it was important that Mr. Gorham, a specialist in urban development, was a member of the Commission. Poverty in the rich countries was still, in fact, mostly a problem specific to big cities and, above all, their suburbs.

The third challenge could be narrowed down to a single question: what could the nation-State do in the context of "globalization"? The nation-State was still the rallying-point to which people felt that they belonged, but all of us were already to some extent citizens - or at least inhabitants - of the world. There were obvious for this. To quote only one, it was not possible to fix wage rates in the textile industry in Europe without taking the rates paid in Morocco, Malaysia or other countries into consideration.

It was obvious what the changes were. They went by the name of wars and the other evils that expressed rejection of the Other. There was the break-up of former compact units and of nations - in the aftermath of Communism, for example - the upsurge of ethnic consciousness and the disquieting spread of racism and xenophobia. These represented all manner of direct challenges to education systems. Other great dangers included hunger and malnutrition, together with illiteracy, on which the Commission dwelt at some length. Lastly, there was creeping unemployment, although its consequences had not yet all been examined.

Education and universal values

The worldwide issues forming the background to the Commission's thinking prompted the fundamental question whether education could purport to be universal. Could it by itself, as a historical factor, create a universal language that would make it possible to overcome a number of contradictions, respond to a number of challenges and, despite their diversity, convey a message to all the inhabitants of the world? In this language which, ideally, would be accessible to everybody and in which the maxims and views of the West would no longer be preponderant, all the world's wisdom and the wealth of its civilizations and cultures would be expressed in an immediately comprehensible form.

The creation of a language accessible to everyone would mean that people would have to rid their minds of certain concepts and learn to engage more readily in dialogue. By its membership, the Commission, bringing together as it did men and women from all disciplines and from all five continents, offered every guarantee in this respect. What was more, the message that this language would convey would have to be addressed to human beings in all their aspects - body and mind, material and spiritual activity, private person and citizen, individual and community member. Why the word "community" recurred so often in the Commission's discussions, although with differing shades of meaning, was because a person could not be fully a person without belonging to a community. This explained why there were such close ties between communities and the formal and non-formal education system. Hence, the first crucial question that the Commission raised was whether it was realistic or whether it served any useful purpose to plan for education policy to be able to convey a universal message. This question, in fact, coincided with the Director-General's ideas and echoed the concerns of UNESCO on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the international organizations, whose duty it was to adapt to a changing world in the process of achieving unification.

The end-purposes of education

In the light of these considerations, the Commission's members attempted to define more precisely what the end-purposes of education might be. Seven main purposes were identified.

In the first place, education should ensure the all-round development of the individual and make him or her capable of achieving self-fulfilment in a pluralist society.

Secondly, education had to train not just individuals but social beings who were capable of communicating, engaging in dialogue and living as citizens, and hence of discharging responsibilities.

Thirdly, education had to counter inequality of opportunity.

Fourthly, it had to provide a response to the different needs of the economy and working life in order to contribute to the progress of society. From that point of view, situations differed very widely. In the countries emerging from Communism, it was essential for education to be re-directed towards the economy and this was also true of research, all too often confined within an academic system that stamped by the ideology of totalitarianism and cut off from the world of production. It was absolutely necessary for there to be a kind of osmosis between education and research.

Fifthly, for these tasks to be properly carried out, opportunities had to be provided for education throughout life, as the Faure report "Learning to Be" had already advocated. An undertaking of this sort always needed to be begun over and over again. In France, for example, the law on continuous training, drawn up by the Commission's Chairman, dated back to 1971, but a great deal still remained to be done. The concept of an education that extended throughout life could, in fact, be linked, as Mr. Geremek had stressed, to that of a life-span in which learning, work experience, social life and citizenship were closely intertwined from a very early age. The Chairman said that, in his opinion, we were facing a genuine cultural barrier that was making it impossible to see the future. If jobs really became a scarce commodity, there would have to be a different way of organizing society. Leisure time should no longer be an empty period or a period of passive consumption, but should enable a society to enlarge and to develop. There was surely as much inequality of opportunity in recreation as there was in employment. What was education doing to teach everybody to make the most of their free time? Lifelong education had to rely not only on the formal education system but on all the non-formal systems, too. Every one of us had to be educator and learner alternately throughout our lives.

The sixth purpose of education would be to ensure technical progress, bring it under control, spread it, and increase its capacity for innovation. Exercising control over technical progress also entailed setting out to solve the ethical problems it posed. The Commission did not necessarily share the opinion of those who one-sidedly criticized university research while extolling the research done in industry. The education system was, at one and the same time, a factor and an agent of research.

The seventh and last purpose was to provide support for mutual co-operation between all human beings and to teach people to know one another, regardless of differences of religion, race and language. It was, as Mr. Zhou put it, to aspire to achieve harmony by building our own life in calm, so that we could better understand the Other.

The Commission's role and working methods

The members of the Commission took the opportunity afforded by the first session to clarify certain concepts - such as modernity and modernization - and to study the documents prepared by the Secretariat, including the one by Mr. Tedesco, the Director of the IBE, on the reasons for the failure of educational reforms. In this connection, the Chairman said that it was also for the

Commission to provide decision-makers with facts to help them draw up educational policies, and not just to conduct a purely descriptive exercise or to outline a philosophy of education systems.

The members of the Commission agreed to prepare an initial series of papers all linked to the themes of education and culture, education and development, and education and work, which the Chairman had put to the Executive Board.

The Commission proposed to draw on the experience acquired by UNESCO in order to go deeper into the specific problems of education, such as how to conduct a successful reform - a difficult exercise in political and social engineering - and how to finance it.

The fact that the Commission would hold its sessions in different regions of the world would also give it an opportunity to listen to the people involved locally and to have a better view of the differences existing and the wide variety of needs.

It would also be necessary to attempt to establish a link between economic and social factors, which was not just a matter of feeling but one of technology. There was a give-and-take relationship between the economic and social spheres, since the economic sphere generated social progress but could achieve nothing without the social dimension. By meeting the representatives of other international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and UNEP, the Commission could ascertain to what extent and in what ways education was taken into account in their projects.

Lastly, the Commission would have to ask itself whether its report would be addressed to specialists or whether it would be aimed at sparking off, at some point or other, a debate that would go beyond the world of education and teachers and involve parents, children, business leaders, trade unionists and various associations engaged in giving education a more effective role. From that point of view, the Commission had ambitious aims, since it was setting out to put education back into an evolving world full of the unexpected hazards that it was precisely the task of education to make it possible to face. Even in times of uncertainty, education had to equip the men and women of the present day and tomorrow so as to help them to know each other better, have confidence in themselves, hold out their hands to others, work together and create welcoming communities that strengthened the feeling that we all belonged to the same global village.

Annex II

U N E S C O

International Commission on Education
for the Twenty-first Century

First session
UNESCO Headquarters - 2 - 4 March 1993

Speech of the Director-General

Mr Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first of all to thank you for taking up the challenge offered, and beginning to address it. The combination of your different personalities on this Commission - each one bringing with it the fruit of its own experience, reflection and culture - has already demonstrated that the whole is often greater than the sum of its parts. Your views will faithfully reflect the complex and fascinating world in which our children are growing up; and from the creative interaction of your individual perceptions will emerge a picture of the kind of education we must invent for the future.

This process will be further assisted by a Chairman admirably suited to the task. His achievements in this sphere throughout his career mark him out as a master of the art of co-ordination. Listening to different points of view and seeking to reconcile them in order to enable all to move forward together has become in a way a second nature to him, and he will once more be able to express it to the full in your debates. He is also a firm believer in interdependence, and this deep-seated conviction seems to me to be particularly important when the task is to confront the contradictions and discrepancies of the world 'in travail' that he has just so brilliantly evoked. Moreover, Mr Delors has for some time now shown an ability that is essential in the task before you: the ability to anticipate. For we are not just seeking to adjust education to a world changing at breakneck speed (which would mean condemning ourselves to be perpetual victims of circumstance), but rather to observe, imagine, foresee - and be prepared for the changes when they come. All this Jacques Delors does with astounding accuracy and ease. Finally - as he himself pointed out - he is a pragmatist; the grander the design, the more practical the approach must be, lest we fall prey to abstractionism. There is no more useful combination for our purposes than that of the global and the pragmatic; a concept and its utilization.

I should like briefly to take up a few of the points made by your Chairman in his summary - which augurs extremely well for the work ahead of you - adding, if I may, a few subjects of personal concern.

I am absolutely convinced that in the years ahead it is going to be essential to be able to train fully-fledged **citizens**, who feel that unless they are participating in the life of their community they do not exist; and in order to exist, in order to exercise their responsibilities as citizens, they must have access to knowledge. Education - as you have pointed out, Mr Chairman - is not only instilling knowledge, but awakening the enormous creative potential that lies within each of us, enabling all of us to develop to our fullest potential, and better contribute to the societies in which we live.

I was also pleased to note that you plan to reflect on the concept of **work** and the organization of time. The balance of work and leisure time is indeed a vital element in the social recovery that is so urgently called for. Given the current situation of economic and social upheaval, we should re-examine our definitions, challenge our ingrained mental attitudes and investigate the forms and purposes of our activity in the societies of the future.

With regard to the dissemination of scientific and technical knowledge, it is borne in on me every day how sadly **scientific information** is lacking in the decision-making process. Far too many decisions with far-reaching consequences - in the domains of energy and the environment, for example - are influenced by the emotions. It is our responsibility to provide decision-makers with absolutely reliable data enabling them to reach objective conclusions.

I also feel that there are two ideas that we should push as hard as we can to have accepted and applied. The first is linked to **life-long education**: the educational process can no longer be defined as the acquisition of knowledge which precedes entry into the working world. It is - and will of necessity become increasingly - a protean process extending over an entire lifetime and covering a variety of activities. The second concept is that of **educational partnership**. When we think of education, we think of the State. However, the responsibility for education is not the State's alone; it is incumbent upon civil society at all its levels and in all its structures. For it is only by making the whole of society aware of its duty to take up the challenge of education that we will be able to lay a firm foundation for the training of fully-fledged citizens.

At this point I should like, if I may, to say a word about **higher education**. To my mind, this level of education has too long been considered a luxury, and thus passed over by the developing countries in favour of basic education, which has attracted all the attention. It is true that higher education is only available to a privileged group of young people: 92% of the world's 18 to 23-year-olds do not have access to it. All the more reason to be extremely demanding of those who do! Society should make these young elites realize that they are already part of the social fabric, and have responsibilities to shoulder. At university, they must learn to take the initiative, and begin to place their imaginations and energies in the service of the transformations that this new era is demanding of all members of the community.

Finally, I should like to underscore the importance of the last of the end-purposes of education that Mr Delors has just reviewed: enhancing mutual knowledge and **understanding** and promoting co-operation between peoples. In a world where distances are shrinking and differences abound, there is nothing to be gained by locking the door and withdrawing into oneself. The best way to survive, and add a new dimension to one's life at the same time, is to learn to live with others, and listen to what they have to say. Tolerance does not mean 'tolerating' others, but getting to know, understand, respect, and - why not? - admire them.

What is needed most today, what young people - and particularly teenagers who are about to complete their secondary studies - are demanding of us more or less explicitly, are **benchmarks**, compasses and navigation charts. Unless we supply them with this essential equipment without delay, we risk witnessing major social upheavals, perhaps within the next five years. We must take action, even at risk of making mistakes. The worst of all would be to do nothing in the face of the intolerable.

Intolerable is the word for the poverty in which three-quarters of humanity lives. Here for some years now the intolerable has been compounded by the absurd, as the flow of financial and human resources has reversed, to run from South to North.

Intolerable too, are the demographic levels that will be reached if the world's population continues to increase at its present rate. And the key to this demographic problem - education - lies in our hands.

Nor should we tolerate the deteriorating quality of the soil, water and air of our planet, which are expected to sustain its billions of inhabitants, when we know perfectly well how the process could be halted.

And how can we tolerate the hatred and violence that are ripping apart communities which a short while ago, were still united by the bipolar equilibrium of terror?

The reason we are not prepared to rise to all the challenges of the future - poverty, population, the environment, ethnic intolerance - is that we are still working with the tools of the past. We must remedy this situation as quickly as possible, so that our grandchildren will not speak of us with Camus' terrible words: 'They could have done so much, but dared to do so little...'.

Mr Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your first session fills me with joy and hope, for you have begun your Herculean task by tackling the most important issue: the question **why**. Only when the purposes of education have been defined will it be appropriate to turn to its content, partners, beneficiaries, methodology, funding, etc. By starting in this manner you have given yourselves every chance, at the conclusion of your deliberations, of measuring up to the expectations of the generation of young people who look to us, their eyes shining as much with anguish as with hope.

I should like you to know, Mr Chairman, that you can count on support from many sources. Your Commission could usefully follow the proceedings of the World Commission on Culture and Development and those of the Ad Hoc Forum of Reflection, and could draw upon the work done by different governmental and non-governmental organizations, not to mention calling upon any of the various units of the Secretariat. Our time, our experience and our energies are at your disposal, and we will help you in any way we can. Your work is the most important of the activities we are now involved in, and its outcome will be absolutely crucial.

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Annex III
13 April 1994

UNESCO

International Commission on Education
for the Twenty-first Century

First session
UNESCO Headquarters - 2 - 4 March 1993

Mandate and Membership of the Commission

BACKGROUND

At its twenty-sixth session in November 1991, the General Conference of UNESCO invited the Director-General "to convene an international commission to reflect on education and learning for the twenty-first century". This resolution came twenty years after the work of the International Commission on the Development of Education established by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1970.

That Commission carried out its work at a time when approximately one-third of the Member States of UNESCO had been independent for less than ten years and were full of hope and optimism for their future, but also when a vast part of the planet was under the shadow of oppression. Its report (Learning to Be, 1972) was described, in the letter of presentation sent to the Director-General by its chairman, Edgar Faure, as a "critical reflection by men of different origins and background, seeking ... over-all solutions to the major problems involved in the development of education in a changing universe."

Twenty years later, it seemed opportune, on the eve of the twenty-first century, for UNESCO to initiate a fresh examination of education, its aims and processes, in order to attempt to shed a clearer light on what is new and what is enduring in ideas and practice and to sketch a map for the future.

The work of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century will cover education in its broadest meaning, from pre-school through school and higher education, including both formal and non-formal education, and covering the widest possible spectrum of agencies and providers. On the other hand, the conclusions and recommendations will be action-oriented and directed at governmental and private agencies, policy-makers and decision-makers, and in general all those responsible for making and carrying out educational plans and actions. It is to be hoped that they will, in addition, stimulate a far-reaching public debate on educational reform in Member States of UNESCO.

The Commission will be completely independent to carry out its work in the manner it sees fit. It will meet over a period of two years (1993 and 1994) and will report to the Director-General of UNESCO in early 1995 on its conclusions and recommendations.

MEMBERSHIP

Chairman

Mr Jacques Delors, President of the Commission of the European Communities.

Members

Mr Isao Amagi, educator, Special Adviser to the Minister of Education, Science and Culture, Japan, and Chairman of the Japan Educational Exchange-BABA Foundation;

Mr Roberto Carneiro, President, TVI (Televisao Independente), former Minister of Education, Minister of State, Portugal;

Ms Fay Chung, Minister of State for National Affairs, Employment Creation and Cooperatives, Zimbabwe, Member of Parliament, former Minister of Education;

Mr Bronislaw Geremek, historian, Member of the Parliament of Poland, Professor at the Collège de France;

Mr William Gorham, specialist in public policy, distinguished career in public service, President of the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., U.S.A., since 1968;

Ms Aleksandra Kornhauser, Director, International Centre for Chemistry Study, Ljubljana, Slovenia, specialized in the interface between industrial development and environmental protection;

Mr Abdallah Laroui, Professor of History at the Mohammed V University, Rabat, Morocco, Member of the Royal Academy of Morocco;

Rt. Hon. Michael Manley, university lecturer and author, Prime Minister of Jamaica, 1972 - 1980 and 1989 - 1992;

Ms In'am Mufti, specialist in status of women, President, Noor Al-Hussein Foundation, former Minister of Social Development, Jordan;

Ms Marisela Padrón Quero, sociologist, Research director, Fundación Romulo Betancourt, former Minister of the Family, Venezuela;

Ms Marie-Angélique Savané, Senegalese sociologist, Member of the Commission on Global Co-operation and Governance;

Mr Karan Singh, Indian diplomat and several times minister, including education and health, author of several books on environment, philosophy and political science;

Mr. Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Mexican researcher in political and social science, Professor at the Center of Sociological Studies, El Colegio de Mexico;

Mr. Myong Won Suhr, Korean educator, President of Kyungwon University, former Minister of Education;

Mr Zhou Nanzhao, educator, President and professor, China National Institute for Educational Studies.

The Chairman is assisted in his work by Ms Danièle Blondel, Special Adviser. Ms Blondel is a former Director of Higher Education in France and former Director of CEREQ (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Qualifications). She is currently Director of IRIS (Institut de Recherche et d'information socio-économique) and Professor of Economics at the University of Paris-Dauphine.

DISTINGUISHED ADVISERS

The Commission will associate with its work a selected number of eminent persons and organizations that represent outstanding thought and achievement in the field of education worldwide. Members of these panels may be called upon to participate in specific aspects of the work of the Commission or its working groups, to attend meetings, to effect inspections, or generally to counsel the Commission.

Individuals

Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Nigerian diplomat, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Secretariat;

Mr Jorge Allende, Chilean biochemist and molecular biologist, Professor at University of Chile, Fellow of the Third World Academy of Sciences, Member of the Chilean Academy of Sciences;

Ms Margarita Marino de Botero, Executive Director, "Colegio Verde", Villa de Leyva, former Director-General of the National Institute of Natural Resources and the Environment;

Ms Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway, chaired the World Commission on Environment and Development;

Ms Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Executive Director, United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), Nairobi, Kenya;

Mr Daniel Goeudevert, French business executive, Chairman of the Volkswagen Management Body, Member of the Board of Directors, International Partnership Initiative (IPI);

Mr Makaminan Makagiansar, former UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture, Adviser to the Minister of Science and Technology of Indonesia;

Sir Yehudi Menuhin, British violinist, President and Associate Conductor, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Nehru Award for Peace and International Understanding (1970), member of the Académie universelle de la Culture;

Mr Thomas Odhiambo, Kenyan scientist, Chairman of the African Academy of Sciences, member of the International Council of Scientific Unions;

Mr René Rémond, French historian, Président of the National Foundation of Political Science, co-director of the Revue histoire;

Mr Bertrand Schwartz, French engineer, university professor and educator, member of the Economic and Social Council, counsellor to the Ministry of Labour;

Mr Anatoly Sobchak, Mayor of St. Petersburg, Russia, Head of the Faculty of Law at the University of St. Petersburg, former Minister of Education;

Mr David Suzuki, Canadian scientist, educator, international speaker and moderator of television programmes and films on science, recipient of numerous awards in areas related to science and broadcasting.

Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, lawyer, former Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources of Saudi Arabia, former Secretary-General and former Chair of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries

Institutions

International Association of Universities (IAU);

International Council on Adult Education (ICAE);

Education International;

United Nations University (UNU);

MANDATE

The aim of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century is to study and reflect on the challenges facing education in the coming years and to formulate suggestions and recommendations in the form of a report which can serve as an agenda for renewal and action for policy-makers and officials at the highest levels. The report will suggest approaches to both policy and practice which are both innovative and feasible, while taking into account the wide diversity of situations, needs, means and aspirations existing in countries and in regions. The report will be addressed primarily to governments, but as one of its purposes will be to address issues related to the role of international co-operation and assistance in general, and to the role of UNESCO in particular, it will also attempt to formulate recommendations which are pertinent for international bodies.

The Commission will focus its reflection on one central and all-encompassing question: what kind of education is needed for what kind of society of tomorrow? It will consider the new roles of education and the new demands made on education systems in a world of accelerating economic, environmental and social change and tension. It will study the implications for education of the major trends in the evolution of contemporary society; it will examine the state of knowledge and experience of the best educational practices in various cultural, economic and political settings in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary policy. In doing so, it will attempt to keep at the heart of its work those most intimately involved in education: learners of all ages, first of all, and those involved in fostering learning, whether they be teachers, parents, members of the community, or other participants in education.

Initially, the Commission will need to identify a series of key questions which it will examine during its work, the answers to which will be the major recommendations it will put forward. These questions will include perennial issues facing governments, societies, and educators, and which will continue to be important during the coming years. There will also be questions raised by new configurations of society, new developments in the physical and social world. The latter will imply new priorities, new study, new action. Some may be universal, based on inevitable and indispensable responses to a changing world; others will be region- or nation-specific and will focus on the widely differing economic, cultural and social situations prevailing in different countries.

Questions concerning education and education systems fall, broadly, into two main categories. The first category includes those questions relating to the purposes, goals, and functions of education, including the aims of individuals and each person's need and desire for self-fulfilment. The second covers the specifically educational issues concerning providers of education, including the models, structures, contents and functioning of education systems.

The Commission will carry out a broadly-based analysis both of what is known about the current situation, and of forecasts and trends in national policies and reforms in education in the different regions of the world over the last twenty years. On this basis, the Commission will reflect in depth on the major turning-points in human development on the eve of the twenty-first century, and the new demands these turning-points will make on education. It will highlight the ways in which education can play a more dynamic and constructive role in preparing individuals and societies for the twenty-first century.

Principles

In its deliberations and work, the Commission will attempt to keep in mind some underlying principles which are universal and common to the aims of educators, citizens, policy-makers, and other partners and participants in the process of education.

First, education is a basic human right and a universal human value: learning and education are ends in themselves, to be aimed at by both individuals and societies and to be promoted and made available over the entire lifetime of each individual.

Second, education, formal and non-formal, must serve society as an instrument for fostering the creation, advancement and dissemination of knowledge and science, and by making knowledge and teaching universally available.

Third, the triple goals of equity, relevance and excellence must prevail in any policy of education, and the search for a harmonious combination of these goals is a crucial task for all those involved in educational planning and practice.

Fourth, renewal and any corresponding reform of education must be the result of profound and thoughtful examination and understanding of what is known about successful practice and policy, as well as understanding of the specific conditions and requirements relevant to each particular situation; they must be decided upon by mutual agreement through appropriate pacts among the parties concerned, as a medium-term process.

Fifth, while existence of a wide variety of economic, social, and cultural situations clearly calls for differing approaches to educational development, all approaches must take into account basic and agreed-upon values and concerns of the international community and of the United Nations system: human rights, tolerance and understanding, democracy, responsibility, universality, cultural identity, the search for peace, the preservation of the environment, the sharing of knowledge, alleviation of poverty, population control, health.

Sixth, education is the responsibility of the whole of society: all persons involved and all partnerships - in addition to those incumbent on institutions - must be taken fully into account.

Secrétariat/Secretariat
UNESCO, 7 place de Fontenoy / 75352 Paris 07 SP - France
tél : (33-1) 45 68 11 23 / fax : (33-1) 43 06 52 55 / E-Mail : EDXXI@FRUNES21.BITNET